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ABSTRACT

Noting basic misconceptions clouding the dialogue about the role holidays play in an antibias curriculum for young children, this guide for early childhood practitioners invites them to rethink their approach to holidays and provides the tools for addressing the holiday question in new, creative, and effective ways. The three sections of the guide discuss rethinking the holidays, planning for change in teaching approaches, and aspects to consider when using holidays in the classroom. Chapters 1 and 2 examine the personal and social meanings of holidays, as well as current approaches and new ideas for celebrating, noting the benefits of a holiday curriculum. Chapter 3 helps practitioners examine their feelings and relationships with their students' families, while chapter 4 suggests ways to formalize the holiday approach into a written policy. Chapters 5 and 6 provide guidelines about selecting holidays to meet particular curricular goals. Chapter 7 presents evaluation strategies. Chapter 8 offers information concerning developmentally appropriate curricula while incorporating holidays. Chapter 9 explains how and why activities should reflect the home practices of all children in class, and chapter 10 addresses the appropriateness of introducing a holiday that no one in the group celebrates. Chapter 11 provides opportunities for critical thinking regarding stereotypes and commercialism and working to counter bias. Chapter 12 offers information on addressing the topic of religion sensitively and appropriately. Chapter 13 addresses how to meet the needs of everyone in the group when some families do not want their children to participate in some holiday activities, while chapter 14 gives examples of how the strategies are applied in individual classrooms. The book concludes with a list of 75 children's books about holidays and adult resources. Contains 44 references. (KB)

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